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CHILDHOOD

When the baby is from a week to a few months old, his mother or his maternal grandmother pierces his ears. To do this she applies something hot to the ear and then punctures it with a strong thorn or a sharp bone. The child learns "to hear things sooner" and obeys more quickly if this is done promptly. "When the ears are not pierced, the child cannot be controlled; he will be wild and go to the bad. It is believed that children grow faster too if this is done." Pendants of white beads or turquoise are strung from the ears of very young children, and this mode of ornamentation continues throughout life.

Sexual intercourse between a man and his wife is not resumed until the child has been weaned. During this period of almost three years the couple is expected to remain continent. Actually some men contrive to "sneak around" and "find easy women" with whom to have relations. But social pressure operates to enforce this rule of continence strictly in the majority of cases. A man so importunate as to demand connection with his wife too soon is subject to sharp criticism and is said to have acted "against" his growing child. "There is a man whose child is not walking yet, and his wife is pregnant. The Indians think he is no good. We are ashamed to have a second child on the way before a first is weaned."

Because the mother's milk supply has been stopped or altered by her new pregnancy, the nursing infant is "starved" and upset and is likely to become a weakling. In such an emergency another minor rite is arranged:

> There's a hair-cutting ceremony that I'm going to tell you about. Let us say a child is only a year old and the mother is pregnant again while that child is still nursing. Then the little child that is only a year old is sick; it has stomach trouble. Something must be done for that child.
>
> When this happens, the mother usually takes the child to an old woman or someone who knows what to do. This old woman cuts the child's hair and puts red paint over the child's body. Then she gives it some kind of medicine.

Polygyny, though it is not widely practiced, exists, and a man with more than one wife "is in a good position, for when one of his wives is pregnant or has a nursing child, he can go to the other."

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842 827 648 595 Not long ago the idea that a child may have more than one father was introduced in a legal dispute. A man had been practicing polygyny with two sisters. Since plural marriages are banned by white edict, only one of these women could be registered as his lawful wife. When the other became pregnant, the problem arose of how to answer the queries of the agency officials. Finally, the woman blamed another young man for her [837] condition, and, since he admitted having had intercourse with her three times, it seemed that he would be punished and be forced to support the baby. It was here that native doctrine was invoked. A legally minded brother of the accused man proved to the superintendent that the "secret husband" had been having relations with this woman and asserted that the child belonged "more to that man than to anyone else." It is doubtful that the superintendent understood the latter statement, but he was enough impressed by the testimony concerning the woman's irregular conduct to reduce the threatened punishment.

826 833 With the theory of blood accumulation goes a concept of blood exchange. The primary result of sexual intercourse is to add male blood to the store of female blood. The condition of the generative blood of the man is modified by his age and the state of his health. The blood accumulated within a woman has two special characteristics in addition. First, it is associated somehow with the menstruum. Menstrual blood is most dangerous to [841] men; contact with it brings, at the least, rheumatic joints. [753] Therefore, men fear it and avoid intercourse with menstruating women. Second, a woman's blood is in a special category because, if she is promiscuous, her augmented supply represents the contributions of many men of dubious soundness.

826 833 753 This fully explains the warning to young men against tampering with older women of bad reputation. Evidently, it is suspected that during intercourse the man's genitals may come in contact with the woman's blood and that any disease which it carries can be thus transmitted to him. Tuberculosis, for instance, has been considered communicable in this way:

In the time before my day and my father's day, the Chiricahua didn't know what tuberculosis was. They knew that sometimes a man's stomach got bad and

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842 monially feeds one egg (now a hen's egg) and the testicle of a
[788] rabbit to her client each day. This is accompanied by the throw-
[782] ing of pollen to the directions and appropriate prayers. According to the account, "she does this a few days, and then the woman is with child."

A ceremony performed by an old woman resulted, one man and his wife feel sure, in the birth of their only child:

> My wife was eager to have children. She didn't do anything about it at first. But four or five years after our marriage we had an old woman perform a ceremony over her. It was held at the camp of the old woman in the springtime of
> [788] the year, when everything comes to life. The ceremonial woman blew smoke to
> [782] the directions first. Then she used pollen. The ceremony was prayer mostly. My wife had to eat some chicken eggs.

Childless marriages are sometimes attributed to male sterility:

[826] It's not only the rich blood [semen] of a man that causes him to have children. Yusn has made it that way. When it's going to be that way, it's going to be that way. I've heard some men say that, if Yusn doesn't want it to happen, you won't get children.

Informants have cited cases of the divorce of childless couples, after which the woman has remarried and borne children, while the second union of the man is as unproductive as the first:

[586] Sometimes each blames the other if there are no children; a woman sometimes holds a man to blame for this and divorces him. Who is to blame is found out soon enough, for they marry others and prove the truth.

Such instances provide proof that "some men are unable to give children." The sterile man tries to overcome his misfortune. "A man might get treatment [ceremonial] for sterility too."

JEALOUSY AND EXTRA-MARITAL RELATIONS

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• 837 To judge from the number of instances which have been reported, extra-marital affairs are not infrequent and usually lead to tension between husband and wife. "Jealousy and consequent quarreling are grounds for divorce. Jealousy is the foundation of divorce. Women are more to blame than men; they nag more." Despite this pronouncement, actual cases of jealousy seem to be quite evenly divided between the sexes. Of one man it is said:

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"He had his house built far from the other camps because he is jealous. He has a young pretty wife and he doesn't want anyone around." Undue precautions which ended in divorce are attributed to another man. "N.'s first wife is married to another man now. N. was abusing her all the time. He even took her out hunting with him in winter when it was cold, he was so jealous of her, and he whipped her all the time." On one occasion a young married man was called aside by a woman. When he returned, he explained:

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That woman was telling me that her husband is jealous of her. This morning I was going past the hospital and I saw her sitting on the steps. I said, "Hello, what you are looking so angry about?" She didn't even answer, so I went on. Her husband saw us there and is accusing her of fooling around with me, she says.

The women are no less critical of mates whom they suspect of duplicity. One informant lamented, "My wife got jealous. I could not stand it. I had nothing to do with other women, but she was jealous." A man in danger of becoming involved in an affair with a girl some years his junior soon found that his wife was closely observing his progress:

About five years after I was married I got into a little flirtation with a girl I had known when I was younger. She tried to attract my attention. She met me at the store. She would talk a lot to me. It was kind of an adventure to me. She was eight or nine years younger than I was.

My wife heard about it. This girl hinted around that she wanted me to go farther with her. I could gather this from the way she talked. She would ask me to see her at night. She would name a meeting place. I never met her. I kept a cool head. If I hadn't, I would have been in serious trouble.

This went on for about a month, until my wife spoke to me about it. Once when she got angry she told me what she knew. She asked me if I had met the woman. I told her, "No." The next time I saw the girl I told her she was causing trouble for me and to let me alone.

In explaining why a certain man declined an invitation to go on a trip, my informant remarked:

His wife probably isn't sick, but she is pretty unreasonable about such things and just doesn't want him to go. She is very jealous. He wants to be like most of the other men and go out a great deal, but he has to stay home to keep peace in the family. She imagines all sorts of things that are not true. He and his wife live near her mother. Once his wife made things so miserable for him that he left. [586]

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837 593 824 A blue-green alga (Nostoc) is used to combat suspected unfaithfulness:

It's found in the mountains, just on the ground. It's very scarce. It can be used both ways—on a man or on a woman. If you think your wife is unfaithful, you can make her smoke it with tobacco, and it will make her stop acting like that. I've had it for about eight years. I keep it in a buckskin pouch. My wife and I went and got it. We tried one day and couldn't find any. We went the next day and got a little.

832 593 [224] Love magic is used also to keep or to regain the interest of a mate. A story is told of a man who stayed out on raids and war expeditions so long that his wife felt abandoned. Her mother, who "knew love charms," performed "a deer ceremony. . . . the kind used to get deer in a certain position, to charm a deer so that he will be at a place where you can get him easily." The husband, who was far away, became lonesome for his wife. That very day he started for home and, when he got there, begged his wife "to take him back."

837 [562] Affairs, especially for women, are probably more common after marriage than before: "Unmarried girls are watched very carefully; married women aren't guarded carefully by the community." In all traditional stories of unfaithfulness and perversion the woman is described as the culprit.

An actual example of infidelity throws light on the behavior of individuals in these domestic crises. A man hears that his wife has become involved with a widower during his absence and hurries home:

His intention was to kill both of them or one of them the night he got back. He had a long knife. I heard this story the next morning. Somehow those two got word that he was looking for them and hid; they were warned and ran out to the mountains. The people wouldn't tell him where they went. He hunted for them all night. He looked in all the homes the next day. I talked with him myself but couldn't cool him off.

Meanwhile a bunch of the leading men got together. They didn't want trouble. They pleaded with him to let them go. Prominent men pleaded with him. The evening before the feast I was with him. The leading men called him over to a place near the feast grounds. They were all waiting for him. I walked over with him. The woman and the man he was after were hidden in another tent. The old men said, "Brother, nephew, we wish to talk with you." They called him all kinds of relationship terms. "Cool down," they told him.

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"The only way I'm going to cool down is if you bring those two people before me, right here. I won't do anything to harm them now, but I want to talk with them before you men."

They didn't say "Yes" right away. Instead these old men said, "Are you sure you are just going to talk to them? We don't want trouble. We don't want you to kill those people or to kill yourself."[1] They had several minor arguments about it until they felt sure he would behave himself.

The husband told them, "Bring them in if you have them close by. I want to talk to them before you."

They brought the two in there. Men were sitting around. The woman came in crying, scared. The man came in and sat down. The husband was sitting over on the other side. He started to talk. "The pleading that these men have done for you is the only thing that is saving you two. I would have killed you both, or you would have killed me, if I had found you. If it wasn't for these men, I don't know where you'd be."

Then he said to his wife, "Are you marrying that man for love?" She wouldn't speak.

He spoke to the man. "Do you know what kind of a woman she is? She fights like a man. She's a mean woman, I'm warning you. She'll give you plenty of trouble. But now that you are going to take her away from me, you're going to keep her. If you get too much of her and give her up, or if you don't lick her enough and can't handle her, I'm going to beat up both of you. Small as you are, you are going to get beaten up many times! I've had many a fight with her. You two are not marrying for love. Now take her and remember what I say."

The man told him, "You can take my word for it, she won't make a slave out of me."

"She'd better not. You'd better not let her," the husband said.

As the traditional stories and this account indicate, the husband of a faithless woman is permitted to take drastic action if he feels strongly about the injury done him. It is the function of the leaders to dissuade him from violence, but their pressure is moral and not binding. A wronged husband who does not show some rancor is considered unmanly. "A man would at least pretend anger." The husband of the episode just recounted, in spite of his great display of fury, "didn't care. He married right away to a Comanche." If a husband does not seem to be very much ex-

[622] [627] 837 156 626

[1] Suicide as a result of unfaithfulness and marital difficulties is not unknown. "If a man's wife was unfaithful and he killed her, he might kill himself." During the stay at Fort Sill a Chiricahua known as Fun took his own life after an attack on his wife in which he thought he had killed her. The woman recovered, however.

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837 [156] [626] cited over such an affair, "sometimes his friends will try to inflame him." Thus the social pressure upon the husband for stern action is often almost equal to the efforts of the leaders to settle the matter peaceably.

684 The woman, since she is close at hand, is likely to be the first to feel the husband's wrath. A beating is the least punishment she suffers. If there is no one to intercede for her, her very life may be forfeit, or she may be subjected to mutilation:

A man never whips his wife without reason. If he finds out that she is unfaithful, he whips her, cuts her nose, or else kills her. He would have to have evidence of unfaithfulness and not hearsay, however. Treatment like this does not come for little things. For not obeying him, or for not working, a man would merely [593] scold his wife, and he would do so in private. If the woman has committed adultery, the people think that what happens to her is her own fault and don't say anything about the punishment she gets.

The reason they cut the nose of a woman is to make her look ugly. She is marked so that no one will meddle with her. One woman who is still living has her nose cut like this. Her husband cut her nose out of jealousy and left her because she went with another man.

The husband is just as insistent that the man who has disrupted his home be punished:

After the husband has punished or killed his wife, he will go after the man and kill him. But the other, if he is wise, will run away and not return for years until it has blown over. I cannot remember a case where the man who is to blame [627] has killed the husband instead. If that happened, close relatives of the husband [602] would kill him.

837 578 Nothing leads more quickly to trouble between men than suspicion or charges of wife seduction:

This morning I went up to a place where a group of men were standing. I was right beside B. Pretty soon L. came. You could see he was angry. He placed himself right in front of B. and said, "Somebody was crawling around my camp last night and bothering my wife, and I just want to say that if I catch anyone around there again, I'm going to kill him." You could see he was talking to B. B. just hung his head. Then L. talked to B. directly and said, "If you ever come around my camp again, I'm going to kill you."

I saw there might be trouble, so I stepped between them. "Now don't get mad," I told L. "Don't get yourself into trouble."

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The birth of twins is considered evidence of unfaithfulness: 845 837

If any woman has twins, she is looked upon as having run with other men besides her husband. My sister is one of a pair of twins.[4] The other died a few days after birth. I think they were both girls. The older one died. I never heard my father say anything about it. One twin would not be kept. We believe that both could not grow up; one would die. They keep the boy if the twins are a boy and a girl.

Sometimes twins are born. Twins are considered unlucky. Twins cannot grow up; they always die. Unfaithfulness on the part of the woman causes twins. Sometimes one of the twins is stillborn.

If it is the husband who is philandering, his wife scolds him 837 and complains to her close relatives. But the man is in no danger of a beating or of mutilation. Few wives take desperate action of any kind:

If the husband is unfaithful and is discovered by his wife, his wife may say to him, "Well, you love the other woman better than me; go and marry her." Or she might let it go and forget and forgive entirely. The women don't have power [562] to do much to the men. A very mean woman might stab her husband at night or [684] something like that. The people wouldn't blame her much, because it is the husband's fault. But only a very hard-up man would marry the woman after [626] this; so that keeps women from killing their husbands.

However, a woman who is very much angered by her husband's conduct can send him away: 837 586

I heard the quarrel at the time. She told him, "You think you're going to have this woman and myself for your wives, and you think you're going to stay with this woman one time and with me another time. You think you're going to go back and forth between us two wives. You are mistaken! You might pull that on somebody else, but not on me. So you'll marry that woman. Go right ahead and marry her. Our married life is over; we'll quit here. You'll leave this house without anything and go and live with that woman." She sent him away.

It is apparent that both husband and wife are in a position to demand fair play and to take appropriate action. Enough feeling of self-importance and competence has been communicated to individuals of both sexes during the training period, so that no one is willing to accept humiliation as a matter of course.

The permanent disruption of a household involves the entire 000

[4] The informant is not here impugning the virtue of his own mother, since this is a half-sister, the offspring of his father's second wife.